

Self-Compassion Info & Practices:

**checklist created -

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_ZP6Q71jJD8_vU593YRSgYfvBQR9WIfzki0wndMPFxA/edit?usp=sharing

A collection of resources, concrete suggestions for self-compassion practice, and a sample video/presentation.

Compiled by addyson tucker, PsyD (they/them) of Wholehearted Psych

A PDF of this doc can be accessed at: http://whpsych.2.vu/Handout_SC

***Note:** The history of compassion work originated in Buddhist frameworks and has been adapted, modified, and in some cases misused by white, Western theorists, researchers, and clinicians. Please [read further](#) about how I approach my practice in this regard.

“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.” -Audre Lorde

What is Shame? *“The intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed...and therefore, unworthy of love & belonging.” (bb)*

- Qualifying statements (e.g., “this might sound x, but...”)
- I’m not _____ enough. I would be worthy if I were _____.
- I _____ too much. I will never measure up to _____.
- I should _____ more/less. If only I could _____.

**Be sure to distinguish [shame / versus / guilt](#), humiliation, & embarrassment*

Where does shame come from?

Greater emphasis on self-esteem (e.g., other-based self-worth)

- *focus on how others see us & what others need/want/expect from us*
- *Desperately avoiding being seen in ‘unwanted’ way*
- *Perceived ideals of identity, success, desirability, etc.*

Avoiding VULNERABILITY

- Try to 'protect' from or avoid uncertainty, risk, or emotional exposure
- (e.g., if I am perfect, if I have low expectations, if I shut down/numb)

SAMPLE Exercise of Self-Compassion Practice

For a personal example walk through + self-compassion overview, check out this [canva presentation/video](https://vimeo.com/721815080) that addyson created! Link:

<https://vimeo.com/721815080>



What do I do for component #3 Self-Compassion???

**To access a checkbox version of this section, go to [this document](#), select file and then copy to create your own.*

Courageous Connection (e.g., reaching out, speaking shame, physical touch, laughter)

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Self-Compassion continued...

- When in shame, consider connection re: reaching out & speaking shame.
- Basic Needs – Enjoy food/cooking with others, Cuddle puddles, Workout buddies, etc.
- Gifts – expression of gratitude & acts of kindness
- Social – Laughter & quality time with loved ones who provide empathy/support
- Reach out - Who has earned the right to hear my story?
 - Marble Jar and BRAVING (boundaries, reliability, accountability, vault, integrity, nonjudgment, & generosity)
 - Own your story – lean into the discomfort with vulnerability
 - Speak your truth – speak shame – what’s mentionable is manageable
- Boundaries/communication for yourself & others
 - Remember those empathic misses
 - Identify & ask for what you need/desire
- Seek experiences of radical affirmation and/or gender euphoria

Nurturing (e.g., kind words, sensory soothing, grounding/relaxation)

- Social – unconditional support & loving kindness toward another
- Basic needs - e.g., when is the last time you ate? Do you need sleep?
- Words – Gentle words of self-encouragement, self-nurturing, and self-validation/affirmation, phrase (*avoid comparative suffering*)
- "I know things feel impossible right now, and you still deserve to take care of yourself."
- *What reminders do you need about the beauty & authenticity of who you are, that you and others might miss when in a shame state?*
- Touch – soothing with senses, gentle soothing touch
- Practices – grounding exercises & meditation, mindful movement, etc.
- Gratitude practices – helpful especially for foreboding joy
- Remind yourself of the feelings associated with moments of radical affirmation and/or gender euphoria

Action (e.g., boundaries, basic needs, problem-solving, acts of kindness)

- Basic needs, (i.e., self-care) e.g., Food, Sleep, Movement, Social Connection
- Routines & Structure – with self & others
- Boundaries/communication - ask for what you need and/or desire – what’s OK vs not?
- Social – distraction, fun, accountability, etc.
- Practices – meditations, relaxation of the body
- Touch – soothing touch, sensory activation

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Self-Compassion continued...

- Problem solving – small tasks, creating a plan, how do we respond, what are our options?
- Engage in experiences of radical affirmation and/or gender euphoria

Holding (e.g., radical acceptance, acknowledging oppression, protecting)

- Acknowledging & noticing oppression, racism, microaggressions, anti-Blackness, impact of white supremacy, etc.
- Holding space for feelings/experiences of radical affirmation and/or gender euphoria
- Holding space, making room for discomfort. Accepting what is with gentleness.
- Touch – self-focused physical holding, soothing touch
- Practices – gratitude reflection, meditations, holding the hard, mindful self-compassion practice - e.g., Tara Brach's [RAIN metaphor](#): RAIN [meditation](#)
- Acknowledge the duality of things | There is suffering and joy, Fear and also courage, Weariness and also vigor, Depletion and also nourishment, Sadness and also humor, Helplessness and also agency, Frustration and also fulfillment, Gender discomfort and also moments of euphoria!

Themes of the above concrete suggestions

§Self care – basic needs and/or nurturing

Food, Sleep, Movement, Social Connection

Distract & Dive into video games, games, hobbies, projects, schoolwork, creative endeavors, movement/dancing, music, etc.

§Boundaries/communication, routines & structure – with self & others, ask for what you need (not the same as what you want).

Minimizing "unhelpful" coping by setting boundaries around unsupportive others, limited news time reading/watching the news, and focusing on the present moment rather than the uncertainty about the future

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Self-Compassion continued...

Focus on what you do have control over, slight moments of hope for the coming weeks, and reflecting on things that you're grateful for (e.g., another chance at experiencing the good feelings of returning to “normal”).

§Social – support, distraction/fun, loving kindness toward another - Time with chosen family + supportive loved ones who provide empathy/support

§Words – Gentle words of self-encouragement, self-nurturing, and self-validation/affirmation, phrase (*avoid comparative suffering*)

"I see that you're suffering and I'm here for you."

"We can get through this, it won't always be this hard."

"I know things feel impossible right now, and you still deserve to take care of yourself."

"Things are awful in the world and I'm still worthy of love & self-compassion."

"It sucks that you can't control or change this situation, and that's OK. You're doing your best."

"You are enough. You are worthy. You are valid."

§Gifts – self, others (e.g., acts of kindness)

§Practices – meditations, relaxation, routines

e.g., Tara Brach's RAIN metaphor:

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/3/18/21181644/coronavirus-covid-19-mindfulness-meditation-anxiety>

RAIN meditation:

<https://www.tarabrach.com/meditation-practice-rain/>

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Self-Compassion continued...

Also, see downloads & exercises at:

<https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations> and

Audio recordings at www.guilford.com/neff-materials

§Touch – physical holding, soothing touch, sensory activation + physical connection with others

§Problem solving – small tasks, creating a plan, how do we respond, what are our options?

§Radical Acceptance - Holding space, making room for discomfort. Accepting what is with gentleness.

Acknowledge the duality of things - We are managing trauma and we are also larger and contain more than that!

There is suffering and also joy,

Fear and also courage,

Weariness and also vigor,

Depletion and also nourishment,

Sadness and also humor,

Helplessness and also agency,

Frustration and also fulfillment...and on and on

For trans folks, pursue gender euphoria/affirmation in whatever ways you can.

Acknowledging & noticing oppression, racism, microaggressions, anti-Blackness, impact of white supremacy, etc.

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Self-Compassion continued...

Noticing these constructs in the systems we interact with daily, as well as on an individual level can be powerful & transformative.

Sometimes there are things we can do in any moment to make adjustments and call out/call in something, while other times it is just holding space & practicing compassion rather than shame!

The intergenerational transmission of trauma (for people of all races!) is a HUGE piece here...check out Resmaa Menakem's *My Grandmother's Hands* as one way to navigate.

What is self-compassion and how does it relate to self-esteem?

- Book Suggestions (Neff)
 - Kristen Neff also has some wonderful downloads & exercises at: <https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations>
 - I highly recommend the 5-min self-compassion break to understand the components of self-compassion as referenced in the image above.
- §The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook (Neff & Germer, 2018)
 - §Audio recordings of many exercises available at www.guilford.com/neff-materials
- **Neff - Self-Compassion versus Self-Esteem** - how are they different???
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvtZBUSplr4>
- **Neff - 3 Components of Self-Compassion** (as in image above):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11U0h0DPu7k>
- Other potential resources:
 - Check out Brené Brown's work on shame & vulnerability as well (e.g., Daring Greatly)
 - For compassion related to food & body: highly recommend The Body is Not An Apology by Sonya Renee Taylor as well as the work of Christy Harrison (including food psych podcast)
 - Here's a cute self-compassion video I like to show:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kfUE41-JFw>
- Free, Daily, Live Meditation Circle of Practice (self-compassion focused)
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4aa4af29ab9-free>

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Self-Compassion continued...

- Every day, 3x/day (typically 8AM, 10AM, 7PM EST)
- 45-min drop-in (brief intro, 20-25 min practice)
- Also has specific sessions for queer & trans folx, as well as for BIPOC identified

Trouble connecting with your body? Check out these resources:

Trauma- & Attachment Related Resources:

Regulating: Becoming safely embodied by dierdre fay, and neurodivergent friendly workbook of DBT skills by sonny Jane.

Model of trauma treatment related to things that can impact our connection to our true self - eg IFS, NARM, Neurobiological impact of trauma e.g., J.Fisher's work & Van der Kolk

Attachment in relationships - Polysecure (Fern) & Attached (Levine & Heller)

Ancestral racial/body trauma - My Grandmother's Hands (R.Menakem)

Radical Body Pleasure & Acceptance - Pleasure Activism (a.m.brown) & The Body is Not An Apology (S.R.Taylor), & Sensual self by Evyan Whitney

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